

## The Married Life of Helen and Warren

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Warren Orders an Expensive Dinner and Helen Can Think Only of the Check

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"We'll not order just yet," Warren waved aside the dinner card. "Expect a gentleman here in a minute."

"Very well, sir," the waiter filled their glasses, placed the menu before them and hurried off.

"Dinner de Luxe, two dollars," read Helen, with a gasp of dismay. "Two dollars! Why, that's outrageous! It was never more than a dollar and a half."

"That is pretty stiff," Warren admitted. "Well, now they've got the crowd coming—they've boosted the price."

"But we don't have to take the dinner, do we?" persisted Helen. "Can't we order a la carte?"

"Yes, and it'll cost a darn sight more before we're through."

"Not if we don't order so much, and it's so hot tonight, dear, we won't want much."

"There's Elliot now!" Warren waved the card at a man in white flannels standing expectantly in the doorway. He saw the signal and made his way toward them.

"Hope I haven't kept you waiting," as he greeted Helen. Then in answer to Warren's query, "Yes, a dry Martini."

Helen was unresponsive to Mr. Elliot's genial efforts to include her in the conversation. She had come to dread this semiannual trip to New York, because Warren always took him out and always paid the bill.

"Now, let's get this ordering over first," Warren pushed the card toward Elliot. "What do you feel like—the dinner?"

"Looks pretty heavy. I don't know about you folks, but I want something light this weather."

Helen greeted this announcement with enthusiasm.

"I was just telling Warren that. We'd all be much better off if we'd eat less while it's so warm."

"All right, we'll order then," Warren turned to the waiter. "Let's see your a la carte card."

The waiter brought it with evident reluctance.

"How about clams?" suggested Warren.

"I can always eat clams," agreed Mr. Elliot.

"Cocktail or plain?"

"Plain."

Helen made a troubled note that clams here were 35 cents—that made a dollar and five for the first course. Perhaps the dinner would have been cheaper after all.

"Soup?" asked Warren. "That St. Germain ought to be pretty good—they make it of fresh peas now."

"Oh, it's too warm for soup," interrupted Helen, hoping desperately that Warren was not going to order a course dinner at a la carte prices. It would be twice as much as the table d'hôte.

"Chicken broth jellied," suggested Mr. Elliot, "that's cold."

At this Helen dropped her eyes to hide their resentment.

"All right—three chicken broths," ordered Warren. Then, reading from the fish list: "Bass, Fresh Mackerel, Fillet of Sole?"

"Oh, dear, I don't think it's safe to eat fish," broke in Helen, determinedly.

"It ought to be all right at a place like this," Mr. Elliot assured her. "I had some sole here last summer—that was exceptionally fine."

Now, Elliot, look over those entrees. Anything there strikes you?"

Helen was wretchedly twisting the napkin in her lap: Clams, soup, fish, and now an entree and probably a roast! Oh, why hadn't they taken the dinner? Every moment increased her fierce resentment of this man. How could he let Warren order so extravagantly?

However, he did suggest that they skip the entree, but for the roast he proposed guinea hen—one of the highest priced items on the menu.

"How about that, waiter?" asked Warren. "That guinea hen enough for three?"

Helen almost gasped. The guinea hen was \$2.00—surely he would not order an extra portion! But the waiter said the hens were fair sized and, with the rest of the dinner, should be enough for three.

"Well, bring with it some new potatoes and green peas. That'll do. I'll give the rest of the order later. Now, let's see your wine card."

By this time Helen was almost in tears. What would this dinner cost? "I'll tell you a good summer wine—sparkling Chablis," suggested Mr. Elliot, cheerfully. "Do you like a spar-

king wine, Mrs. Curtis?"

"Why, I know so little about wines," answered Helen, fearing that sparkling Chablis was expensive, and wanting to order Medoc, the cheapest claret on the list. "I often tell Warren I enjoy the red ink at those Italian tables d'hôte as much as I do champagne."

But this hint for inexpensive claret passed unnoticed.

Everything was exceptionally good and well served, but Helen, who kept trying to add up in her mind the amount of the bill, could not enjoy it. She had propped the menu against the mirrored wall beside her and kept glancing at it to verify the prices.

After the roast Warren ordered endive salad, then coffee, cordial and cigars. It was half-past ten before he called for the check.

"Here's something I haven't seen since I was in Paris," remarked Mr. Elliot abruptly, taking up the pepper grinder with its unground pods and grinding out a few grains on the tablecloth.

"No, you don't often see those," Helen answered stiffly, feeling that this was merely to make conversation while Warren paid the bill.

"Pepper should always be ground fresh. Now, in India they serve it in—," began Mr. Elliot, but Helen did not hear the rest; she was watching anxiously for the waiter to bring the check.

It was well over twelve dollars, but she had a morbid desire to know the exact amount. Mr. Elliot was launched on a long story about India, so that he might seem absorbed while Warren paid, a subterfuge which she knew.

Warren was too generous and whole-souled to see through.

The waiter was coming now. But, to Helen's astonishment, he placed the tray by Mr. Elliot—not by Warren. Then she saw that it was not the check—but money! Several bills and some silver! What did it mean?

"See here, what's this?" demanded Warren, with a puzzled frown.

"Got ahead of you this trip," smiled Mr. Elliot, shoving a dollar bill toward the waiter and pocketing the rest. "I've dined with you every time I've been in New York, so it was about my turn."

"But, how in the devil—"

"That was easy. Just slipped the head waiter a twenty-dollar bill as I came in. Told him to deduct the check."

"Well, it's one on me, all right," grinned Warren, "but you'll not put that over again."

Helen's first sensation had been an immense relief. Warren did not have to pay the check—it was paid! But, then, came the thought of her ungraciousness to Mr. Elliot.

The color flooded her face as she fumbled with her fan. Did she imagine it, or was he looking at her with a grim satisfaction.

It was a relief when he left them at the subway.

"Nice fellow," mused Warren, as he lit a cigarette. "Yes, Elliot's a mighty fine fellow. Corking dinner, too." Then, suddenly, "What the devil made you so glum?"

"Why, dear, I wasn't—I didn't mean to be. I've had a headache all day from the heat—perhaps that was it."

"Well, when a man gives a dinner like that, it's up to you to look pleasant."

"But I didn't know it was his dinner—I thought—" Helen stopped in confusion; she had not intended to admit that.

"Oh, that's it, is it?" Warren gave her a keen glance. "You thought the dinner was on me, and you were so blamed stingy you begrudged every mouthful!"

"You know it wasn't that," lied Helen, miserably. "You don't think I—"

"You're a fine kill-joy," contemptuously. "See here, this thing's growing on you. By Jove, if you get to begrudging what we eat—"

But the rest was lost in the roar of the train as it drew in.

Helen sank into a seat, her eyes fixed on the blank walls of the subway. Was she really so small and mercenary? Was this desire to save growing upon her? If it was, how could she combat it?

She thought of the wasted evening, of the dinner which she should have enjoyed, but which had been for her only a period of torture.

And yet when Warren was constantly complaining of "hard times," how could she enjoy a dinner upon which she felt he was squandering money so recklessly?

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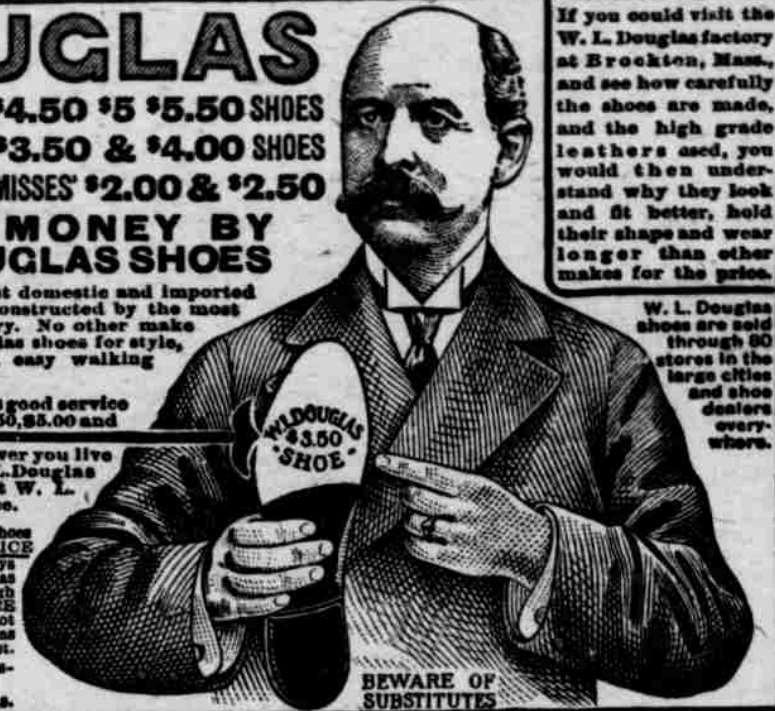
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## INDICATIONS OF AN EARLY SPRING

Great Prosperity Ahead for Western Canada.

The most recent advices from all points in Western Canada report that conditions are apparent for an early spring. Farmers are going over the implements, getting their seeders ready for operation, the plows in shape for extended breaking, and there is a general optimism. A great many new settlers have already arrived, and the reports from Canadian Government agents in the United States point to the fact that in a few days there will begin the usual emigration from various of the Central and Western states. From the Eastern states the number of farmers going to Canada will be greater than in any past year. There has been a fairly large snow-fall during the winter, which will greatly add to the precipitation of last fall, which in the opinion of old-timers was in itself sufficient to insure a good crop during the present year.

There will be very little tilled land that will be without a crop this year. The authorities, though, are pleading with the farmers to seed only such land as has had careful preparation, for rich as is the soil of Western Canada, it is no more fitted to produce good crops uncultivated than is that of any other land anywhere else. There have been accounts of failures in some portions of the agricultural districts of Western Canada, and also reports of small yields in some districts. A good deal of this is accounted for from the fact that notwithstanding the advice of men of experience, there are farmers who will persist in seeding land not properly prepared. This may be done this year, but those who cultivate on reasonable and logical methods will be certain of a paying crop. There is every reason to believe that the high prices of all kinds of grain will continue.

With thousands and thousands of acres of land waiting for the husbandman to bring it forth with a crop, it is no wonder that Western Canada is continuing to prove such an inviting field for the agriculturist.

Seventy million dollars is a conservative estimate of orders which came to Canada as the direct result of the war. Governments of the allies have been placing large orders in Canada and buying huge quantities of supplies for cash.

The total value of exports to Europe from Canada has jumped about 15 per cent since the war started, while in certain lines the increases have been enormous.

Therefore the results of the demand of the allies for war and other material is beginning to be felt in the financial life of the Dominion. There is a marked activity in many commercial lines, and conditions are fast becoming normal.

Western Canada is receiving a relative benefit to the East.—Advertisement.

A gravity railroad will take visitors around the Panama exposition.

Misconception.

Representative Herman A. Metz, apropos of neutrality, said at a luncheon in Philadelphia:

"Some of these people take a low, debased view of neutrality; otherwise they wouldn't do the things they're doing."

"Their idea of neutrality, in fact, reminds me of the two actors' idea of marriage."

"At the seventh wedding breakfast of the first actor the other, who had himself been married six times, said:

"Well, old man, I thought you had learned by this time that a marriage is nothing but a sentence of hard labor for life."

"Yes," said the other actor, "but it's a sentence that you can get commuted by bad behavior."

"Lobby" as a Diplomat.

In Mr. Thorold's "Life of Henry Labouchere" this story is quoted: The grand duchess of Tuscany had a venerable maid of honor about seventy years of age. She had piercing black eyes, and looked like an old postchaise, painted up, and with new lamps.

"How old do you think I am?" she once asked me with a stammering smile, that caused my blood to run cold.

I hesitated and then said

"Twenty."

"Flatterer," he replied, tapping me with her fan. "I am twenty-five."

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